

# CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

"HOW BEAUTIFUL UPON THE MOUNTAINS, ARE THE FEET OF HIM THAT BRINGETH GOOD TIDINGS, THAT PUBLISHETH PEACE."—Isa. lii, 7.

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## NEW YEAR'S DISCOURSE.

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By T. J. SAWYER.

We spend our years as a tale that is told.

Psalm xc, 9.

It is well sometimes to stop in our journey through life, and look back over the past, thence to gather lessons of experience, and prepare as much as possible, for the vicissitudes of the future. Among the convenient and befitting seasons for this useful retrospection, none certainly are more suitable than the last hours of the dying, or the first of the new-born year. Though time is ever rolling on, and though the close and commencement of our year are only conventional among the civilized nations of the earth, unmarked by any of the obvious changes of the natural world, education has taught us to feel that it is more than an ordinary season. It is a kind of breathing-place in our hasty journey, where all seem to halt for a little season, some for one purpose and some for another.

The gay make it a time of festivity and joy—of dance, and mirth and song. In the hilarity of the present hour, they think not of the past. Its sorrows and its joys, are all forgotten in their dreams of the future. Some flowers may have faded from their circle—the fair and the beautiful, may have gone down to the dust, since their last New-Year's festival of pleasure, but they are remembered no more. The still voice that comes up from the tomb, the more commanding because it is still, they hear not. Time's busy fingers seem to have effaced from their hearts the memory of the once loved ones that are gone. They throw aside their weeds and tread with buoyant spirits alike on the ruins of friendship, and the desolations of the departed year.

Some of the religious, whose feelings seemingly approximate to fanaticism, regard it as an almost sacred duty, to close the Old and commence the New-Year in the temple of worship or at the throne of grace. There is something beautiful and affecting, I confess, in the idea of a multitude assembling in the house of God, to bid farewell to the dying year with thanksgiving, and to welcome its unknown successor with the voice of prayer to the Eternal. Surely it ever becomes us to draw near Him, who holds all times in his hand, and while we proffer him the gratitude of our hearts for past blessings, humbly to invoke his benediction and smile for the future. But the hour of midnight is an unfit season for public devotion, and especially so amidst the inclemencies of winter. While then a romantic zeal or a wild apprehension of religious duty might prompt us thus to keep New Year vigils, the genuine spirit of christianity evidently requires no service at our hands, unsanctioned by prudence and reason.

Others still who neither mingle with the gay, nor sympathize in all the fancies of the enthusiastic, regard New Year's as an occasion suitable for religious thought, for serious retrospection, for prayer and praise. And it becomes doubly so, when, as in the present instance, it happens on a day set apart for devotional exercises and moral instructions. May we not, then, improve a few minutes in contemplating the vicissitudes of the past year, and in endeavoring to gain wisdom from its lessons to sanctify and guide us in coming time.

"We spend our years as a tale that is told."

The vanity of human life, and the uncertain tenure by which we hold all earthly enjoyments, has ever been the favorite theme of the moralist. There is something in the thought, that a few days more will cut us off from the land of the living, which cannot but affect even the most unthinking and giddy. It is not singular therefore, that the virtuous of all classes have ever wished to impress upon the mind the solemn fact, that our earthly pilgrimage is short. The skies and the fields have been visited—the living and the dead questioned—the folly of fools and the wisdom of the wise, have alike been searched out, to gather, if possible, truths and figures calculated to arrest the attention and chain the thoughts. The falling star, that gleams for a moment in the evening sky and is seen no more, has by some been chosen to portray the shortness and beauty of human existence. Bright and attractive, it is lost before we can sufficiently admire it, and we turn the eye with regret from the place where it shone in its momentary beauty and vanished forever. Others have borrowed figures from the silken flowers of the field. They spring up under the vernal sun, and smile amidst their perfume and loveliness for a little season, and then fade and wither away. Frequently have the inspired writers indulged in this beautiful and impressive comparison. "As for man his days are as grass; as a flower of the field so he flourisheth: for the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more." "All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth the flower fadeth," and "the grace of the fashion thereof perisheth."

Like a sigh or a murmur—like a tale that is told, our years pass away. A thought, a look, a word, and all is over; the dream is past; the story is ended. But brief as life may be it is full of incident and interest. Its very vicissitudes give it a value that, with our present feelings and frailties, no state of constant enjoyment could impart. They throw a shade of romance over the past, which renders its memory doubly dear, and plume the wings of expectation for the scenes that yet lie hidden in futurity. We sometimes murmur, it is true, at the changes to which we are liable, but we might murmur still more, were we doomed to drag out a life of dull, tedious monotony, interspersed by none of that variety that gives existence one of its charms. Our years, like a well told tale, "are nothing else but a continued novelty," rich in every thing that can warm, animate, depress and chill the heart.—Spring time, with its flowers—its breath of balm—its carolling birds, when all nature starts into renewed existence, and seems to rejoice in its beauty and grace. Summer with its fragrance—its evening dews and oft returning showers—the forests in their gorgeousness, the whole earth clad in its exuberance of vegetation. The silent change goes on. Autumn is at hand. The flowers that were blooming yesterday, to day are withered, the leaves that were fresh and green, are now sear and falling. Fragrance and beauty pass away, and the husbandman rejoices in the fruits of his labor. A few days more and nature is wrapped in the mantle of Winter. The flocks and herds forsake the fields, the forests are strip-

ped of their foliage, and deserted by the feathered tribes. "Melody is dead," and the cheerless blast sighs among the naked branches.

Thus passes the year. These are the ever recurring changes of the world; for we have the unfailing promise, that "while the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." But these are not the changes that we most deeply feel. They are what all have looked upon before us, and all that come after shall behold the same. The changes that are ours, and that come home to our bosoms, are those that affect our relations in life. These I cannot, I need not describe. Every heart knoweth its own joys and sorrows. No eye but that of the Omniscient can see what passes within us, or know how we are affected by what passes around us. In the year now gone, friendships have probably been formed—hopes excited, and dreams indulged. Happy, indeed, if Death has not been busy about our fire-sides, and in our circles!! But, oh, who can plead exemption for a single year? We have seen some start with us on the year that is past, full of health, and expectation and hope. Their dreams were as bright, and their prospects as fair, as our own. They thought as little of the great Destroyer as we. No word of warning was whispered in their ears, and for a while they moved on with us. But where are they now? They are not by our side. Their lips have greeted us with no "Happy New Year." We speak their name—we call upon them, but they answer [us not. Oh, memory, thou wilt come to remove our suspense. The grave, the grave!—that has claimed them for its own, and we are left to mourn and weep.

It ever was, and ever will be thus. The brightest flowers soonest fade, and the dearest of our hearts too often first pass away. These are the changes of time that sear the heart. And in no hour is our sorrow more poignant than in one like this, when we stop to look back on the past and feel that some of our friends have gone the way of all the earth, since our last New-Year. Thus it is, that we spend our years as a tale that is told. Though they pass like a dream, we know full well that their sorrows are chilling realities.

Beloved Friends—We have just sighed our requiem to the departed year. Another great division of our time is gone to return no more. Another portion of our pilgrimage is finished. Its sorrows and its joys—its hopes and its disappointments, are for the future to live only in memory. We are now entering upon another year, perhaps with high anticipations, only to see them blasted—indulging joyous hopes, only to be disappointed.

May we not here profitably contemplate for a moment, the scene through which we are passing? "If in the commencement we give loose rein to imagination, and believe human life to be such as we could wish, in the end we shall probably reap only the bitter fruits of disappointment. If on the other hand, we suffer our spirits to be depressed, we shall deny ourselves much of the happiness within our reach, and pass our days in darkness and gloom." Let us, therefore, learn from the past what we can expect for the future, and be prepared for whatever of weal or woe may yet await us.

This world is a state of trial. It admits of



no perfection. Its brightest skies are shaded by passing clouds. Its purest joys are embittered by some mixture of sorrow. The sunny scenes through which we are permitted to pass, are after all clothed with delusive loveliness, and too often wear only imaginary beauty. But it is not well to indulge in melancholy reflections. The world, if not so blessed as the Poet's imagination would make it, is far better than it appears to the jaundiced eye of the hypochondriac. Though it boasts no perfect bliss, it seldom—never, justifies cold dejection and despair. We should remember that it is a scene of active exertion and imperfect enjoyment. It has enough of happiness to bind us to it, yet not so much but that suffering and disappointment can reconcile us to leave it. It is wisely fitted for our present purposes—a school adapted to our circumstances and wants. Would we reflect as we ought on our present state, we should rejoice in the blessings infinite Wisdom sees fit to confer, and bow in submission when they are withheld.

We are too likely to forget the shortness of life, and to feel and act as if this world was our home and our "continuing city." In the enjoyment of health and happiness, surrounded by blessings, sharing the society and friendship of those we love, the unwelcome thought seldom intrudes, that our "days are passed away as the swift ships; as the eagle that hasteth to the prey." We witness almost daily the sable hearse and the melancholy procession. We meet at almost every turn the dark habiliments of mourning, and "the weeds of wo." We see every day the bereaved parent, the weeping brother or sister, the widow in her affliction, and the helpless orphan. The world is full of sorrow, the tomb utters its still, but eloquent voice, the very air we breathe tells us of decay and death. And yet we pass on so lightly amidst it all, that a spectator would think affliction had never thrown its blight on our heart, and that the dark shadow of grief had never crossed our path of gladness and joy. It is hard, I know, for one whose cheek is flushed with youth, or on whose brow sits smiling health, and in whose heart are springing up hopes of happiness and dreams of bliss, that are stretching onward for years to come—it is hard indeed, for such a one, to think of exchanging life, with all its friendships and pleasures, for the winding-sheet, and the cold, damp, noiseless grave. We will not heed the warnings of the past, the sights our eyes have seen, and the sounds our own ears have heard.

"All men think all men mortal but themselves."

Many of our follies and errors spring from this cherished delusion. We do not stop to reflect how our conduct will appear, when we are about closing our intercourse with the world. How painful in that trying hour, must be the recollection of neglected opportunities, and misspent time—of abused confidence, slighted friends, and injured enemies; and no privilege left to make reparation or correct our errors. Could we be taught to realize that this world is not our home, how much better and consequently how much happier, might we live. The little vexations we now meet, would be looked upon as trials only of our virtue and patience. The disappointments we now suffer, would be regarded as kind chastisements from an all-wise Parent, calculated to wean our affections from a delusive world, and raise them to things eternal in the heavens.

In order, however, to make the best improvement by the services of this New-Year's season, we must carefully review the past, and reflect on the course of conduct we have hitherto pursued, and the feelings we have indulged. As Christians, our lives must be lives of improvement. Every day should witness some error corrected, some unholy passion subdued, some

affection sanctified. But how are we to expect this, unless we learn something from the lessons of experience? We must often examine ourselves also by the word of God. That is the standard by which to try our hearts. What then, has been our conduct for the year just now past? How would our present character compare with that we sustained a twelve month since? Have we made any advancement in the christian life? Do we enjoy improved moral feelings, and a more devotional frame of mind? Does the christian religion exert a more constant and powerful influence on our hearts? Is it becoming more and more our meat and drink to do the will of our Father in heaven? In fine, is our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, a living, active principle, that "works by love," purifying the heart and enabling us to overcome the allurements and temptations of a sinful world?

But if upon the whole we have been successful, for the year past, in our christian race, let us not think that we may henceforth cease, or relax our exertions. We have yet, in all probability, much imperfection, if not many besetting sins. Our love to God, is cold to what it should be; our duties are yet but partially performed; our light before the world, which should recommend the religion of Jesus to others, is at best but a flickering, I fear, an inconstant ray. We have nothing whereof to boast, but all like the humble publican have occasion to say, "Lord be merciful to me a sinner."

Finally, through what remains of our earthly pilgrimage, let us bear constantly in mind the cheering truth, that there is an overruling hand,

— "a divinity that shapes our ends,  
Rough hew them as we will."

Let us search for true wisdom in the word and works of our Creator. Let us "cease to do evil and learn to do well." And when our years like a tale shall be told, and time's changes and sorrows are over, may we all, with the ransomed family of man, receive a happier and more joyous, than a New-Year's greeting, in that world, where parting never comes—where grief is unknown, and death is no more.

#### BENEFICENCE.

BY BISHOP HORNE.

"IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE."

The words are cited by the apostle Paul, as those of our Lord Jesus Christ. They occur, not in any of the Gospels, but descended, as we may suppose, by tradition, from the persons to whom they were originally addressed. The truth contained in them was deemed too important to be forgotten, and the apostle was, therefore, commissioned by Providence, to gather up this precious fragment of the bread of life, that it might not be lost.

Beneficence is often by our Lord and his disciples enjoined as our duty. In this passage it is recommended as our interest; our present, no less than our future, interest.

Thus hath God ordained it to be, in every instance. Nor can it be otherwise, if the blessedness of man consisteth in a resemblance of his Maker. He is himself the most beneficent of beings, and he is the happiest. He giveth all, and he can receive nothing, but the humble acknowledgments, the grateful praises of his creatures. He openeth his hand, and filleth all things living with plenteousness. The eyes of all wait upon him, the whole family in heaven and earth looketh up to him for a supply of every want, and he giveth them their food in due season. He clothes the pastures with flocks, the hills with woods, the gardens with flowers, and the valleys with corn.—Power, riches, and wisdom are his, and they are all exerted for the good of man. He is mighty, but he is mighty to save; his riches are the riches of mercy and grace; and his wisdom plans our welfare.

If the glory of the Godhead be too dazzling an object for the eyes of frail mortality steadfastly to behold, view the glory veiled in human nature.—Consider the Author and finisher of our salvation, Christ Jesus. He gave himself for us. He came down from heaven to give life to the world, from which he received only persecution, sorrow, pain and death. Yet the delight afforded him by his employment, was an overbalance for all his sufferings. It was his refreshment, and his support, through the course of his pilgrimage. "My meat," said he, "is to do my Father's will, and to finish his work." He "went about doing good." His life was ever active and useful. Living, he preached, wherever he came, the doctrine of salvation; dying, he bore his last testimony to its truth. For the suffering of death crowned with honor, invested with all power, and seated at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, like his bright representative in the firmament, he diffuses light and life unto the ends of the earth; he reigns and shines for the benefit of the world; and, in so doing, he is pronounced and proclaimed, by every creature, blessed for evermore.

The considerations which have been offered, may, it is humbly hoped, suffice to evince the truth of the proposition in the text, and to demonstrate, that felicity is the offspring of beneficence. The properties of this felicity will deserve your notice.

*It is immediate.* The husbandman, in this case, waits not, as in others, a long season for his harvest; in sowing he reaps. Nay, the very desire of doing good, the very first thought of that kind which springs up in the soul, brings with it its own reward: it produces a pleasure unknown to those who erect their happiness on the misery of others, or who make the happiness of others a source of misery to themselves.

*It is exquisite and unalloyed.* It is attended and followed by no satiety and disgust, no trouble, no bitterness, no remorse, no repentance. Our bounty, you will say, perhaps, may be ineffectual, or its objects may prove ungrateful. Ingratitude may diminish its value to the receiver, but not to the giver: he has done his best, and his work is with his God, who causes the sun to arise and the rain to descend on the fields of those that acknowledge him not.

*It is secure:* it may be called one's own. A stranger intermeddeth not with it to disturb it; the thief cannot break through and steal it away.

*It is durable.* Mere earthly felicity of every kind, even the most innocent, like other terrestrial productions, involves in it the seeds of its own dissolution. There is a leaven in the lump, that will sour and corrupt it; there is a worm in the gourd, already at work to corrode and consume it. But the happiness now recommended to you, never wasteth nor diminisheth; it increases in the enjoyment; it renders other pleasures needless, and supplies their place, growing every day more and more satisfactory and delightful? but most of all will it be found so in the day (not far from any one of us,) when a solemn leave must be taken of the world, and its most celebrated pleasures; when all we have received must be parted with, and that alone will remain with us which we have given away. Happy then the man whose faith has been to him a tree of life, yielding this, its proper fruit; whose love to God has been evidenced by the love of his neighbor; who has lived, not for himself, but for all that needed his assistance.

FROM THE SENTINEL AND STAR.

"All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets." Matt. vii. 12.

In this laconic, though grand and sublime text, spoken by our Lord and Master, is comprised the whole duty of man. It is a fact, not to be dispu-



ted by any, that no mortal exists who is not in search of personal happiness, but various methods are pursued by different individuals, for the acquisition of it. Reader, you may travel the broad road of fashionable vices—you may amass, by fraud and deception, immense wealth—you may enjoy all the luxuries derivable therefrom: yet happiness to you will be a stranger; you have not done to others as you would they should do to you—your conscience (if you have any) will goad you for your unjust and unrighteous conduct both sleeping and waking: and all the witcheries of the world cannot shield you from a righteous retribution. Any thing short of a compliance with the Savior's matchless command, to do unto others as you would they should do to you, will afford you little or no real comfort, let your situation, in other respects, be what it might.

Many high-toned professors, of every denomination, instead of doing unto others as they would that others should do unto them, content themselves with doing to others what others do to them, and call it justice: if they are slandered, they repay the compliment; if they are cheated, they cheat in return; and thus, virtually, assume to themselves, the character, they feign to despise—that of a slanderer and dishonest person.

Strange as it may appear to our friends of the partial system, we are of the opinion, that no one, unless he be guided and governed by the impartial and heavenly principle of *universal* love, can comply with the requisition of our text; and consequently cannot be the happy recipient of the celestial plaudit, "well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord." We do not mean, however, to be understood to declare, that all who say they believe in God's impartial goodness, act in accordance therewith; would to God they did. Many, we believe, who profess not our doctrine, act upon its benign principles; while others who talk much of its beauties, fail to comply with many of its glorious precepts! "If ye love me, keep my commandments," said the Savior; and our text is one of his most prominent ones. "Love your enemies"—"do good to all men," are also the commands of the same heavenly teacher. Until all men love each other, as God loves them, all will not comply with our text. In other words, until all men become PRACTICAL UNIVERSALISTS, hatred, malice, evil surmisings, backbitings, and every evil word and work, will be found among them, to the exclusion of virtue, happiness and peace. Those who love whom God loves, know by experience, the blessed consequences flowing from a strict observance of the mandate exhibited in our text. They, and they alone, "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." May the number increase, until not one shall be heard to say, "I hate my brother;" then shall righteousness cover the earth, as the waters do the mighty deep—then shall the doctrine of God's universal love reign triumphant, and "God be ALL IN ALL." T.

FROM THE GOSPEL ANCHOR.  
**THE AGE WE LIVE IN.**

"Be not conformed to this world."

Rom. xii, 2

The word which in our translation is rendered world, should have invariably been translated age. When we are admonished not to be conformed to this world, we must understand that we are not to adopt the manners of the age.

The people of the world, or age, in which Christ and his Apostles lived, were distinguished in several particulars, from true disciples, and which particulars we shall notice.

They were a praying people. We are not to understand by this, that they cultivated a spirit of prayer in their minds, but they ostentatiously made long and loud prayers in public, to make the world believe they were very pious. Instead of retiring from the gaze of the multitude,

to enjoy calm and holy communion with their Maker, they were found in the streets, market-places and synagogues, and their devotions were accompanied with so much noise and vehemence, that people who judge by the outward appearance, might come to the conclusion that they were very holy, pious, godlike people.

They were a proselyting people. What schemes were adopted in those days to make converts, we are not informed. The fact is merely stated, and it is left for us to look at the present age to ascertain the character of the proselyting system. We have little doubt that we have advanced in this business, since the days of the Scribes and Pharisees, but as the spirit is the same, no doubt if these righteous people had lived in the present time, they would have been at the head of the "Tract Society."

They were a Missionary people. "They compassed sea and land." They were very anxious for the salvation of the "poor heathen;" and therefore they were always engaged in some scheme to convert them. How great their success might have been, we are not informed; but we are not left in the dark, with respect to the happy effects on the character of the proselytes—they made them "twofold more the children of hell than themselves." Their system was sectarian, and consequently their converts became the same bigoted, superstitious, self-righteous people as themselves, while they added to their new follies the imperfections of their old creed.

They were a money making people. In all their schemes in pilfering the pockets of the people, they covered the business over with the convenient cloak of religion. "They devoured widow's houses, and for a pretence made long prayers." This was a cheap way to pay for property. If they visited the widow and fatherless in their affliction, it was not for the purpose of administering to their necessities, but to take from them what little they might have remaining, and pay them in prayers.

We shall not make an application of these remarks. The most superficial observer may trace a likeness in what is passing in review before our eyes; and if people do not see these base impositions, it is because "they have eyes and see not, ears and hear not, neither with their hearts do they understand."

FROM THE GENIUS OF LIBERTY.

**TO UNIVERSALISTS.**

We are using exertions not to raise up a new sect, but to renovate what we believe to have been pure and original Christianity. We might content ourselves with the simple name of Christians, were it not that in an early day, Christians, being led away by their selfish feelings, apostatized from the gospel of Jesus and engrafted the heathen doctrine of endless punishment into the Christian religion. Now it seems necessary that we take another name to distinguish us from those who inculcate that heathenish sentiment.

Yet many have supposed that our sentiments were hostile to the Bible, to religion, and to all the restraints of rewards and punishments. One great cause of this is, that thousands of the enemies of religion, have ungenerously assumed our name; and our opponents have most bountifully given all the unprincipled and licentious to us, whether we were willing or not.

We wish to see every thing in its proper place, and all men known by their distinctive appellations. Therefore we wish all those who are not Universalists would distinctly say so, and let it be clearly understood as far as they are known. 2. We would have all, who really are Universalists, come out openly and boldly in the avowal of it, and not like Peter deny the truth because it may be unpopular. 3. We

would have all real Universalists contemplate the principles of their doctrine, and endeavor to live in perfect accordance with those principles. To this end, it is necessary to "put off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."

Having put off the old man, we should proceed to put on the new, by living as much like the God of universalism or the gospel as we possibly can. We must be gentle and merciful to our companions, children, parents, friends, and enemies, and honest and benevolent to all men. We should reverence and adore God with all our faculties, and love our neighbors as ourselves; not that we can or ought to love them as much as ourselves, but as or in like manner that we love ourselves; and of course be willing to do by them as we can justly wish them to do by us.

Now what is the reason that all these things cannot be perfectly accomplished? Why should any wish to call himself a Universalist who is not one? Why should any real Universalist, who thinks his principles are perfect, and the most honorable to God, and most conducive to the happiness of all men, of any that can be imagined—why should he wish to deviate from those principles in any thing? It is not enough for us to say, we are generally as good as the orthodox. We should be better. We should be as much better as our doctrine is better than theirs. We do not wonder that they often do wrong; we rather wonder that they ever do right—that they are not as bad as their doctrine. It is doubtless true that their doctrine is so bad that they cannot come down to it in practice; and if ours is so good that we cannot come up to it, we can at least try to do it. "He that hath ears to hear let him hear."

He who would undermine those foundations upon which the fabric of our future hope is reared, seeks to beat down that column which supports the feebleness of humanity; let him but think a moment, and his heart will arrest his purpose. Would he pluck his little treasure from the bosom of poverty? Would he wrest its crutch from the hand of age, and remove from the eye of affliction, the only solace of its woe? The path we tread is rugged at best; we tread it, however, lighter by the prospect of that better country, to which we trust it will lead. Tell us not it will end in the gulf of eternal dissolution, or break off in one which fancy may fill up as she pleases, but reason is unable to delineate; quench not that beam, which, amidst the night of this evil world, has cheered the despondency of ill-requited worth, and illuminated the darkness of suffering virtue.

In striving for the comforts of life, seek those that are least expensive. It is better to have your house furnished with comfortable than with costly things.

Exert yourself to overcome the difficulties attending your present business, rather than enter into other pursuits.

FROM THE FARMER'S MUSEUM.

**A SHORT SERMON.**

"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men. For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."—Paul's First Epistle to Tim.

Whoever takes an enlarged view of the world—of the natural relations of man to man—and of



the duties enjoined upon all by the Gospel of Jesus Christ, will readily feel the force and propriety of the Apostle's exhortation. He foresaw the consequences which must necessarily result to society from that self-righteousness which induces professors of religion to look upon their non-professing neighbors as outcasts from God, and was well aware that such views must prove a powerful influence on the intercourse of man with man. He knew that those who considered themselves the only righteous, and all who differed from them, heretics, must carry into their intercourse with the world, the feelings which such belief could not but engender; and that, consequently, the design of the gospel, which was, to promote brotherly kindness, benevolence and charity, would be frustrated. Hence the exhortation that "supplications, prayers, &c. be made for ALL MEN."

And why should supplications, prayers and intercessions, be made for all men? The Apostle gives two reasons. First, "That we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty;" and secondly, "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior."

But what effect will praying for all men have upon our LIVES? If we pray in faith and sincerity for all men, believing that God is wise and good, and is concerned for the salvation of all, we should have no disposition to injure any of our fellow beings; but shall seek the good of all. Is there an individual on earth, however vicious and depraved he may be, who has not some dear friend, for whose welfare he is concerned, and for whose happiness he sincerely prays? Let him extend this friendship to every individual of the human family, and is he any longer a vicious man? This is the design of the gospel—this is "the law of love."

But can those pray in faith and sincerity for all men, who believe that the larger portion of mankind will be eternally miserable—and that the Creator foreknew that this would be their condition? The idea is preposterous. Must not the prayers of such be made in "wrath and doubting;"—which is pointedly condemned by the Apostle. What is the natural inference? Is it that those who are firm in the belief of the future endless misery of the larger portion of mankind, do not desire their salvation? This seems an uncharitable conclusion. How is it? Men generally find little difficulty in believing what they *hope* is, and *wish* may be true. Our excessively religious people find no difficulty in believing that *they* shall be saved, and that their neighbor, (not in the gospel sense) who walks not with them, will be damned. Now has not *selfishness* too much to do with this belief?

Again—"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior." And why is it acceptable? Because He "will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." What a lesson for mankind!—and especially for *religious sects*! God is willing that all men should be saved; many of his creatures are not willing. "The unworthy members of such and such societies, who differ from us, cannot be Christians—cannot be saved!" Shame on such a spirit! it is the only obstacle to the salvation of ALL men. Christ toiled and suffered and died, to make us willing that all men should be saved; introduced his gospel to save men from the bitterness of sectarian zeal, and to induce them to live as a band of brothers, each seeking, not his own, but the good of others. And what use have we made of his glorious precepts and examples? Let the conduct of the professed Christian world answer—let the bitterness manifested by *religious sects* towards all but their own adherents, illustrate the inquiry. The conclusion is lamentable, but is, nevertheless, warranted by strict observation, that there is more genuine religion—charity, benevolence, and brotherly kindness—among what are re-

proachfully called the *world's people*, than in the Church; and this is not very surprising, when we examine into the character of the instructions of many of our professed religious teachers. Morality, is, in effect, decried; their people are taught that an attendance upon religious worship, four day's meetings, inquiry meetings and conferences, and contributions to religious associations, constitute religion; and that orthodoxy, or right belief, "will cover a multitude of sins." Religion, with such, has little or nothing to do with their intercourse with the world—especially the *irreligious* portion of it—and where rites and ordinances are so tenaciously adhered to, and *right belief* deemed so efficacious, the "weightier matters of the law" are generally omitted.

According to St. Paul, have we the *right* to believe that God will cast off forever a portion of mankind, and, especially, that portion who dissent from us? We say nay; for as we *believe*, so shall we *act*; and anticipating the sentence of Heaven, shall cast off and denounce all whom we judge God will cast off. We are to pray in faith for all men; and if all so pray, all will be saved; for what is sincere prayer but the language of the heart? And what better passport can we have to Heaven, than that we ardently desire the salvation of ALL?

FROM THE CHRISTIAN INTELLIGENCER.

#### THE CAUSE OF TRUTH.

BR. DREW—Notwithstanding the noise and confusion produced by four day's and protracted meetings, and other revival operations, the still small voice of truth is heard by many, and is opening their eyes to the abominations of the present anti-scriptural movements to produce revivals, not a little to the confusion of the coadjutors in this business. The zeal of the revivalists is much more abundant than their knowledge. Hence, they pursue just such a course as is calculated to open the eyes of people to their real intentions. We will but for a moment notice some of their movements during a protracted meeting recently held in this vicinity.

Their faith appeared to have been heightened to such a degree in the efficacy of protracted meetings in converting souls to the *precious* doctrine of endless torment, by the flaming stories of what was done through their influence somewhere a great way off, that they seemed to imagine, that if they could induce people to attend their meeting, their conversion was certain. Hence, they used every possible means to induce people, especially young persons, to attend their meeting, except an open and manly invitation. They sent anonymous notes to various young persons of both sexes, requesting their attendance on the protracted meeting. This proceeding was calculated to induce and did induce all who knew what belonged to good manners, to think that they were either ashamed or afraid to invite them personally or to have their names known as the authors of such invitations. They also had a multitude of notes read, requesting the prayers of the *godly* promoters of the meeting for the conversion of some *ungodly son, daughter or friend*. This did not tend very much to give young people a good opinion of them, as those who received the anonymous invitations, concluded, that they were invited, that they might hear themselves publicly slandered by these notes handed in by some misguided parent, or some officious and impudent acquaintance. These proceedings soured their minds, and disgusted them with even the names of such meetings. These proceedings have effected what argument could not while their minds were so much prejudiced toward the advocates of the horrible dogma of interminable wretchedness. These proceedings have lessened the veneration which the many youth had for the advocates of

this doctrine, and induces them to inquire whether our endless misery brethren, are really the salt of the earth, as they profess to be, or not. This leads them to examine the Bible to see if it justifies the present extraordinary proceedings—the violation of every rule of propriety—the disturbing of once peaceful families by encouraging wives to disregard the wishes of their husbands, and inducing them to neglect their family and domestic concerns, and leading children to disobey their parents, all to build up their party under the pretence of saving immortal souls from an endless hell. And they, as every student of the Bible will, find that busybodies and meddlers of other people's matters are ranked among the most depraved and wicked. There, they learn that the Lord Jehovah has never commanded men to hold four day's, or protracted meetings to save the souls of men, or taught them the craft and management which is now put in requisition;—but they perceive that it is all the emanations of the corrupt hearts of a designing and wicked priesthood, to enslave the minds of men, and render them subservient to their wills. These discoveries wean them from their attachment to these instructors, and induces them to inquire with an anxious solicitude to know what the truth is.

And as is always the case, when a spirit of inquiry is excited, liberal Christianity loses nothing, as it will bear the closest scrutiny. Thus, while the enemies of truth are the most active in propagating error, they are advancing the cause of truth, though much against their wish. This is always the case in the propagation of error. Its advocates are aware of its unsoundness, and consequently, they cannot trust to the goodness of their cause to advance it. Hence, they are compelled to exert some extraneous influence, to make up the deficiency in its soundness. And, in doing this, they are so completely absorbed in fear, lest their cause should not succeed, that they are driven so far beyond the bounds of prudence, that the unsoundness of their cause is at once perceived by the observer, and is of course injured rather than benefited, by their extraordinary efforts to sustain it. If the late extraordinary efforts in other parts of the country to produce revivals, operate as they have in this vicinity, there is nothing to be feared from them, farther, than that many of their adherents may become perplexed by their inconsistent doctrines, and finally their reason be dethroned and end their pilgrimage on earth by suicide. Thus, perhaps, blasting many of the fairest and fondest hopes of anxious parents. But the cause of truth has nothing to fear from these extraordinary movements. Let all the powers of darkness combine against the truth and they cannot overthrow it. It will finally prevail.

I believe that our heavenly Father overrules the most wicked designs for good. Men mean it unto evil, but God means it unto good, and he will make them subservient to the advancement of his cause and kingdom, although men intend a different result. Jehovah, the great architect of heaven and earth, is our God and Father, and he "*worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.*" Therefore, we may safely resign the cause of truth to his care, while we act well our part, resting in the full assurance that it is secure from all the assaults of the enemy. We have no reason to fear the result—but we may rejoice, for the Lord Jehovah reigneth. Let the prophets of Baal, though they be four hundred and fifty men to our Elijah, cry mightily to their God, for "*peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked,*" but let us follow the example of good old Elijah when surrounded by four hundred and fifty of the prophets of Baal, and calmly call upon Jehovah, being assured that his ear is ever open to the cry of his children, and will grant answers of peace.

ALETHEIA.



## CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

EDITED BY T. J. SAWYER AND F. PRICE.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 21, 1832.

## PUBLIC WORSHIP.

In articles under the above caption which we have presented our readers in the two preceding Nos., it has been our object briefly to state the following propositions.

1. That public worship is a duty enjoined in the sacred Scriptures.
2. That it is strongly recommended by the advantages it affords community for moral and religious instruction.
3. That it is recommended by the intellectual pleasures derived therefrom.
4. That a similarity of sentiment and feeling in the members of a congregation, is indispensably necessary for the highest enjoyment of the public service.

We think these positions will not be questioned by any intelligent and conscientious christian. And in the remarks we are now about to offer, we wish to be understood as addressing ourselves particularly to Universalists in this city, but we fear that many of our observations will apply with almost equal truth, to Universalists throughout a large part of our country.

It seems to us clear as demonstration, an imperative duty of Universalists to establish and support public worship of their own, where their doctrines may be inculcated, and their services be of such a character as they can approve, and in which they can conscientiously and heartily unite. It seems to us a DUTY, which they owe to themselves, their own consciences, their families, their friends, the cause of Truth, and their God—a duty which they cannot neglect without condemnation. And how, we would ask, is this duty performed by Universalists in the city of New-York? It may be said, we think without danger of contradiction, that more than ONE HALF of the Universalists here, steadily attend and support the popular Limitarian Churches. In other words, they give their influence and their money to build up and advance the interests of doctrines which in their hearts they believe false, alike derogatory to the character of God, and injurious to the happiness of man. It is not our present business to inquire into the moral character of this conduct, but may be permitted to remark that if Universalism is worth believing, it is also worth supporting. Besides this large portion who are devoted to the interests of popular error, as we and they themselves believe, no inconsiderable number of well known Universalists are the regular attendants and supporters of the two Unitarian Churches in this city. With respect to them we have less to say. We are as decidedly Unitarian in our sentiments as any, and to the general doctrines of the Unitarian denomination, we have few objections. But still it might be well to remember that Unitarians are not Universalists. They generally observe an extreme caution against avowing our distinguishing sentiment. Now we take it upon us to judge no man's conscience, but the case seems clear, that if they are not Universalists, they are not enti-

tled to the support of Universalists, and if they are, and are still ashamed or afraid to avow it, they do not deserve our support.

We may also suggest to those interested in these remarks, that the question relative to the character of God, is far more important than that which merely concerns his unity.

But we may return and again ask what Universalists are doing for themselves, for the building up and extension of their own glorious faith. We need only look about us for the answer. We are doing nothing, or very little indeed, compared with what is in our power. If not lending our influence and money to the support of other sects, but too many of us are useless to our own. We may be told, it is true, that there is no convenient place of public worship—that if we had a large and respectable church centrally located, they would attend with pleasure, and should be happy in doing whatever is in their power for the advancement of Universalism. We do not doubt their word, but beg leave merely to ask them, how long they suppose it would be before this state of things could be brought about, if all Universalists should act on their own principles, and do nothing, but strengthen the hands of our opponents, till all was done for them. One truth is clear. We may give our money as long as we please to other denomination, but we may rest assured they never will build us the church we want, or aid us a farthing, in that or any other object that interests Universalists.

We shall not at present pursue the subject, but ask every Universalist to reflect on it for himself. And we are confident that the result of every mind must be, that *Universalists need a church, centrally located, of large dimensions and respectable style—that Universalists are able to build such an edifice—and that they are also sufficiently numerous to fill it.*

## STRONG LANGUAGE.

Br. Leavitt, of the New-York Evangelist, has some very sensible remarks on the use of strong language, and pointedly reprehends his revival brethren for their excessive indulgence in it. He says "it tends to cast suspicion on the very Bible, as though the strong language used there were hyperbolical."\*\*\*\*\*When a protracted meeting is described as very powerful, full of the presence of God, and accompanied with evident demonstrations of the Holy Ghost, we are now ready to expect that not only large numbers were awakened to seek salvation, but that many were truly converted during the meeting. And the mind feels a painful disappointment, if in the result it only appears that a few individuals are awakened." We are pleased to see Br. Leavitt opening his eyes to the evils of protracted meetings. He might have known a year ago, that these revival stories were "hyperbolical," and well calculated to bring the Bible into suspicion and disgrace. "The same fault," he continues, "is particularly manifest in people's prayers. They ask for blessings so large, and in language so strong, that to those who are acquainted with their views, it is certain they know not what they ask." Truly, had that idea never before occurred to him? We scarce

ever heard a Limitarian pray without observing that "this fault was particularly manifest." They usually offer up their petitions for the salvation of all men, the whole world, Adam's race, &c. &c. yet that individual, who is foolish and wicked enough to believe the very doctrine for whose truth they so ardently pray, is politely called by themselves an *Infidel*, branded as an enemy of Christ and his religion, and charitably associated with *knaves, swearers and drunkards*. We remember that the Rev. Dr. Bates, President of a literary institution up among the two hundred thousand heathen of Vermont, and who always offered the morning prayers in the college-chapel, never omitted the following petition expressed in the following strong language: "Our hearts' desire and prayer to thee, O God, for ALL MEN is, that they may come to the knowledge and acknowledgment of the truth, and be saved." This, however, is only strong language, for "to those who are acquainted with his views, it is certain he knows not what he asks." It is really fortunate that the Being, "who heareth and answereth prayer," is omniscient, and knows what allowances to make for this 'strong language,' otherwise he might grant their petitions, and thus disappoint their dearest expectations forever. S.

## SCRIPTURE EXPLANATION.

For thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just. Luke xiv, 14.

But they who shall be accounted worthy of that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage. Luke xx, 35.

From these passages, it is easily and indeed naturally inferred, that only a part of mankind shall be the subjects of the resurrection from the dead. "The just" seem to be those "who shall be accounted worthy;" and the inference is certainly plain that the unjust shall not be accounted worthy. But before adopting this opinion, it might be well for us candidly to enquire whether these passages admit of no exposition, that will forbid this inference. It is not to be doubted that the general testimony of the Scriptures supports the doctrine of a universal resurrection of our race. The gospel preached to the fathers was, that in their "seed, which is Christ," all nations, families, and kindreds of the earth should be blessed. It was one of the especial objects of Christ's mission "to destroy death;" and Paul with unwavering assurance declares that "as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive," and that "death, the last enemy, shall be destroyed." These passages are unequivocal, and the Scriptures must contradict themselves, or our inference is unsound.

The necessary explanation is found by a reference to the opinions prevalent among the Jews in the time of our Savior. It seems that the Pharisees, by far the most numerous and popular sect, believed in a resurrection from the dead, from which, however, were excluded all who were notoriously wicked. That the Pharisees, with their contracted views of theology, and especially their sectarian notions of personal righteousness, should suppose the happiness of a resurrection from the dead confined to their own nation, and perhaps to their own party, ap-



pears to us very probable. It is certain, however, that they believed none but *the just* would be *accounted worthy* of a resurrection. And it is in accordance with this opinion that the passages at the head of this article are to be explained.

We shall perhaps be asked, if this conformity of expression to popular notions is not a tacit, but virtual acknowledgement of their truth. We answer: By no means. In the first mentioned passage, the phrase, "resurrection of the just," expressed no more and no less, we think, than our present one, "the resurrection." The occasion on which it was uttered, did not require a departure from common phraseology. The same may be said of the other passage under consideration. The Sadducees "who deny that there is any resurrection," in a caviling spirit, had offered a query for solution relative to that state. Our Savior answered them in the common language of the time and place. He explicitly avowed the doctrine of the resurrection, and completely removed the ground of cavil or objection which the Sadducees had affectedly or honestly assumed. At the same time he inculcated a doctrine, which, without containing a shadow of ambiguity, is now almost as generally treated with contempt by his professed disciples as if he had never uttered it. "They who shall be accounted worthy of that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage; neither can they die any more: *for they are equal unto the angels*; and *ARE THE CHILDREN OF GOD*, being the children of the resurrection." It is little less than an insult alike to common sense, and the word of Jesus Christ, to affirm, as thousands now do, that those who "are equal unto the angels," and who "are the children of God," may yet be the subjects of never-ending wo. But to return to our subject; we may remark that the circumstances, the question which he was called upon to answer did not demand an intimation how many should be raised from the dead, and the common language on the subject was evidently recommended by the fact, that it was familiar, and consequently readily understood. The inference, therefore, which we should naturally draw from these passages, that only a part of mankind will be embraced in the resurrection, is groundless. The expressions when considered in connexion with the prevailing opinions of the age and country afford evidence neither of a universal nor partial resurrection, but merely of a resurrection to angelic purity and bliss. Other portions of the scripture present abundant testimony of its universality. The expression, "the resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust," once used by Paul, evidently refers to the common Jewish opinion with the addition which the religion of Jesus had made to it, and can have no doubt that even those whom Pharisees might account *unworthy*, were yet to become "equal unto the angels; and to be the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." S.

#### A GOOD SAYING.

"This is but a small boast," says the Advocate and Journal, "in comparison to what will be heard by those who shall put forth holy exercises, and make themselves new hearts, and get to heaven without any grace, as the Evangelist contends all impenitent sinners have natural power to do."

Our Methodist brethren can not well brook the new doctrines of the New School Presbyterians. Their own faith was vastly better than Calvinism for getting up revivals, and their rapid progress has made them a little vain. But "pride goeth before a fall," and they are now in danger of being supplanted by a new system of religious faith. Br. Bangs either belies the Evangelist, or that contends that all impenitent sinners have

natural power to make themselves new hearts and get to heaven without any grace. It is very manifest that the "new light" Presbyterians are going far ahead of Methodists in their notions of free-agency. According to the latter, do what we may, it is the grace of God alone that can sanctify and save us. The former, however, in the opinion of the Advocate, have avoided the doctrine of grace, and man "is able, in and of himself" to work out his own way to heaven.

How *evangelical* christians agree, and how they love one another!! S.

#### RELIGIOUS STATISTICS OF MAINE.

A correspondent of the New York Observer furnishes the following statement concerning the various denominations in Maine.

"The Baptists have 210 churches, 136 ministers, 22 licentiates, and near 15,000 communicants, in this state: the Congregationalists have 156 churches, 109 pastors, and more than 10,000 communicants; the Methodists, 56 ministers and more than 13,000 members; the Free Will Baptists, about 50 congregations; the Friends about 40 Societies; the Unitarians, 12 societies and 8 ministers; the Episcopalians, 4 ministers; the Roman Catholics, 4 churches; the New Jerusalem church, 3 Societies; and the Universalists, several congregations."

"And the Universalists, several congregations!" This writer could learn definitely respecting all other denominations, but the Universalists were scarce worth naming. A reason however may be found, why he could not give as much information relative to Universalists as other sects. The fact we believe is that there are about 50 Universalist ministers in that state, we know not exactly, but think between 100 and 200 societies, and probably more Universalists than of any other denomination. This would have been alarming intelligence to the readers of the Observer, and therefore the writer, out of mere charity, contrived to pass the subject as lightly as possible. S.

#### THINGS AS THEY SHOULD BE.

We have received two or three private communications, from a highly respected friend in Pennsylvania, on a subject in which ourselves and friends, as a denomination, are deeply interested; and indeed all liberal minded men; for once establish this principle of rejection in regard to ourselves, and others would soon be compelled in like manner, to "bow the knee to Baal." Though we are not authorized, we venture to present our readers with some extracts from these letters, with the hope that others may be induced to follow the example. Let us not be misunderstood. We are no advocates for the violation of Law, but when one Universalist is rejected in consequence of his religious principles, we really can see no propriety or justice in compelling another one, of like standing, to take an oath and testify, particularly before the same Court; and in his refusal, we should think he would be sustained by every principle of right. For one, we should have no opinion of being the mere puppet in the hand of such an accommodating Court. In a communication of Nov. 28th, our friend observes: "At the last Court of Common Pleas held in this county, a Universalist, a Lawyer, a very respectable man, was offered as a witness and rejected by the Court\*\*\*\* I expect, at our next Court, to be called on as a witness; and if so, I shall confess my religious belief, and refuse to give evidence." From a communication of the 2d inst. we extract the following. P.

"As I suggested to you in my last, I was called before our Court as a witness, on Wednesday of the 2d week in December. I stated to the Court, that, called upon as I was, I felt myself under some embarrassment; but that I had ever taken the Bible as 'the man of my counsel,'

and that taught me not to deny my Lord and Master—and I must therefore confess that I was a Universalist—most emphatically such—that I had been so 37 years, ever since the age of 20; and that, as the older I grew, and the more I studied my Bible, the stronger I grew in the belief, if to confirmation strong, any thing could be added. I stated to the Court, that I considered my civil privileges unjustly taken from me—I was virtually *disfranchised*—and that I would never take an oath as a witness before that Court, till they *revoked* their late decision. I was not objected to by the opposite party against whom my testimony must have had a bearing, and the lawyer who wanted my testimony, observed, "that the Court would compel me to testify." I denied their right to do it. They could not compel me TO VIOLATE THEIR OWN LAW, and should they attempt such a thing, they could not effect their object. They might send me to jail or to Botany Bay, I never would take an oath in that Court, as a witness, without a restoration of my civil rights, of which I had been deprived.

By this time I began to grow warm, and lest I should grow more so, and commit some overt act, I took my hat and walked out of the Court-house—believing that I had done my duty."

#### SHAMEFUL IMPOSITION.

The last Utica Magazine gives, under the above head, an account of what they term "a most disgraceful piece of *pious* knight errantry," which took place in that village on Sunday, the 1st inst. The circumstances are briefly these: A Presbyterian lady of that village, by the name of Matthews, called at the house of a Capt. Greenmore, on the morning above mentioned, knowing that he and his wife were absent, and persuaded his little children, a boy about 8, and a girl about 5 years old, to accompany her to the Presbyterian Sabbath School, and this, too, in opposition "to what she knew to be the express directions of Capt. G. and the known wishes of Mrs. G. with whom she had frequently conversed." An older child, a daughter of 12 years, informed the lady that the children *did* attend Sunday School, not at the Presbyterian, but at the Universalist Church. "The lady then told the children, that was a very bad, a very wicked place—that they must not go there on any account—they must go with her to the good school—they should there learn good things, have fine presents, pretty Books," &c. till they were almost persuaded to accompany her. The elder sister, intent on preventing it if possible, said their clothes were not in order. All would not do—go they must, and she ransacked the house till she fitted them out, and took them away with her from their home and their own School. The senior editor of the Magazine closes the account with the following just observations. P.

"Such was the transaction, and such the name of the actor; and we leave it to the decision of our readers and the public, whether such proceedings are not most disgraceful to the age, and the country and particularly to the village, in which we live. What would Presbyterians say, were Universalists to watch their opportunity, and in the absence of parents, go and seduce their children, contrary to express orders, to go to our Sunday School? Would they patiently brook such an insult, endure such an outrage upon domestic laws, such violation of the rules of civil society? We trow not. Has it come to this, that we cannot leave our little ones, our homes, nor our firesides for a moment, without running the hazard of having our dwellings entered, our children seduced and kidnapped, by intermeddling sectarians, taught to despise the authority of parents, and led away to the nurseries of superstition and bigotry? The world is getting to a strange pass if these evils are to be endured and there is no remedy to be applied."



## CHRISTIAN PREACHER.

We acknowledge the receipt of the twelfth number of this valuable and interesting periodical. It contains two sound and ably written discourses. The first is by Br. Samuel Brimblecone of Westbrook, Me. entitled "What is Religion," the second called "True and false Conversion," is anonymous. The subjects are universally important, and certainly deserve the attention of every christian.

The first Vol. of the "Christian Preacher," is now completed and we rejoice that such encouragement has been afforded its enterprising and indefatigable editor, as to warrant its continuance. Such a work is needed in our denomination, and we think its merits have been so sustained as to render it highly creditable to the connexion, as well as advantageous to our common cause. The first number of Vol. 2, will contain sermons by Br. H. Ballou of Boston, and Br. James Hall, Preceptor of Anson Academy, Me. We beg our readers to recollect that the "Christian Preacher" is published monthly, each number containing at least 16 octavo pages, at \$1 a year.

Subscriptions received at this office. S.

## FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

"Ponder the path of thy feet."—Solomon.

Mankind, in most cases, are inclined to be rational beings, and readily acknowledge the importance of consideration. In the common concerns of life, at least, they seem to realize the necessity of pondering the way of their feet to avoid falling into those delusive snares with which the world is filled. Hence in their various pursuits they are accustomed to reflect, and exercise reason in devising means for the accomplishment of their designs. Aware that deception marks the course of men and lurks unseen, "in many a prize," they seem inclined to move with cautious step, lest unhappily they become involved in serious and, perhaps, inextricable difficulties. Nor are the wise and good alone reflecting men. Even the knave perceives that caution and close examination are necessary to avoid that very deception which he himself so freely practices.

But while on other subjects men are disposed to reflect, and "look before they leap," how little regard is often paid to the maxim when religion is the theme; and how often do they, without reflection, seize on almost every thing that bears the name. Many indeed seem to glory in the idea of having "got religion" in the course of a few hours, or perhaps instantaneously. They appear to suppose deception on this point entirely out of the question, and hence embrace it often with a rashness and precipitation more becoming a war horse than a rational being. Terrified with the vivid descriptions of an endless hell, they shrink with horror from the view. And told that they are in danger of suffering it, yet to get religion will secure them against the impending doom, they seize upon almost any thing that comes in their way—perhaps a mere momentary excitement of the mind, call it religion, think they have got it, and are safe. But why is it that they are so rash, thoughtless, and precipitate? Why do they not "look before they leap?" Why not consider whether it is not possible, that even the religion they embrace to save themselves, is more to be dreaded than the hell from which they shrink with horror? Perhaps that very hell is nothing more than a mere vision of an equally visionary religion, which they have embraced to escape it. Why do they not examine these things? If consideration on other subjects is necessary, why not also on this? And why so cautious on others, yet so reckless and inconsiderate in regard to this? Why will they be fools and wise men at the same time?

Is it from the supposition that religion is some-

thing in which they cannot be deceived?—something that cannot be counterfeited? Yet here they manifest a gross inconsistency of character. They will often acknowledge that there may be deception by rejecting the substance, and seizing upon a shadow. Facts also evince that there is quite too much spurious religion in the world. Is that pure which destroys the happiness of all who come within its influence?—which corrodes every enjoyment, embitters every cup of pleasure, involves its votaries in the most distressing doubts, and sinks them in the lowest of human woe? Is that pure which hurls reason from her empire in the soul, and whose course is marked with despair, insanity, murder and suicide? Is that pure which dries up every fount of tenderness, converts love into hatred, and sets man at variance one with another? No. Such is far from being pure. Different, indeed, is the influence of pure and undefiled religion upon the soul. Instead of destroying, it greatly augments the happiness of all who exercise it. It is the sweetener of life, the refiner of society, and the promoter of harmony and love among men. Nothing indeed infuses such a glow of pleasure through the soul, or is so well calculated to make

"The silken down of happiness complete," as the exercise of undefiled religion. It effectually restrains the impetuosity of passion, and restores calmness and tranquillity to the mind;—

"giving the heart to drink

From its own treasures, draughts of perfect sweet"

Who indeed does not perceive the difference in the effects of true and false religion? And perceiving, who can deny that counterfeit abounds?

If then there is so much called religion which in fact is not, why will men so inconsiderately drink in every thing that bears the name? Or rather, why reject the substance with disdain, and grasp, so eagerly, the shadow? Do they suppose all that is clothed in the garb of sanctity, is genuine? They may be mistaken. Who can tell? No man would receive a sum of money however trifling, without ascertaining whether it was good or bad. Why then take upon trust, without examination, any thing that bears the name of religion? "Ponder the path of thy feet," says the wise man; and there is no one that does not feel the propriety of this injunction on every subject except religion. Why then disregard it on this?

Religious subjects are indeed the last of all that ought to be received without examination. As our happiness in life, depends on our exercise of true religion; and as the effects of false are so dreadful and appalling, it requires our utmost caution to gain the true and guard against the false. If then, "with rash hand in evil hour," we catch at any thing that is called religion, we may be deceived, and drink a deadly poison. If deceived, who, without shuddering, can think upon the dreadful consequences that may ensue? These are every day before us. Almost every dawning morn wakes but to witness new scenes of insanity, murder and suicide, occasioned by the wild delusions of a false religion. Almost every setting sun mourns over the madness and distraction of the raving maniac. And almost every passing breeze bears through the land, the dismal death groans of murdered victims—victims to the shrine of a false religion. Who has not heard? And who is so insensible of danger—so regardless of his own happiness, and that of all he holds dear to his heart, as to turn a deaf ear to the warning voice of these? Where is the father who, while the death shrieks of little children, slain by the hand of an infatuated parent, are sounding in his ears, will still push rashly onward to grasp the same delusion which occasioned the murderous deed? Will not the tender mother pause and reflect, lest unhappily herself be deceived as others have been, and

fall a victim to delusion, or, in the height of her unrestrained frenzy, plunge the pointed steel in the bosom of her own smiling infant. And the delicate female—will she hear or will she forbear? Will she disregard the silent, yet expressive language of the maniac's vacant stare? Will she disregard the wild ravings of perhaps her own loved companion—distraction, occasioned by a delusive phantom called religion? Can she gaze in imagination upon the blood-stained garments of the slain daughters of her country, and not give heed? Can she think of these things, and yet with rashness seize the same unhallowed phantom which occasioned them?—a phantom which indeed may cause the crimson current of life to flow from her own delicate frame? O, maidens, take warning. Pause and reflect. And ye fathers, ye mothers, brothers, sisters and friends, be intreated to consider your ways. Cast your eyes over the desolations occasioned by false religion, and take heed to yourselves. Drink not the deadly poison. "Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established." R. O. W.

## DIED.

In Bradford, Vt. on the 30th Nov. Mr. JOSHUA GERRY, aged 72. Mr. G. served his country in the revolutionary war, was an early settler in Bradford, where he lived respected for his exemplary morals, and died lamented. He had been for many years, a firm believer in the final restoration of all mankind to holiness and happiness; and his faith supported him in the hour of death. He died rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God.—*Watchman.*

## AGENTS.

The following gentlemen will act as Agents for the MESSENGER, to whom applications may be made, Frederick A. Smith, Stamford, Ct. G. Lounsbury, Long Ridge, Ct.; N. S. Bailey, Norwalk, Ct.; Alva Gray, and J. D. Taylor, Saugatuck, Ct.; A. A. McNeil, Bridgeport, Ct.; F. P. Ambler, Trumbull, Ct.; Herman Fairchild, Newtown, Ct.; A. Price, Bethel Ct.; Hezekiah Scott, Ridgefield, Ct.; Thomas Purdy, Rye N. Y.; J. McCoy, Peekskill, N. Y.; S. L. Hayes, Cairo, N. Y.; Rev. T. J. Whitcomb, Hudson N. Y.; M. W. Riggs, Avon, N. Y.; Z. B. Oakley, P. M. Huntington, L. I.; Post-Master, Buckram, L. I.; Rev. Wm. Hutchinson, Hempstead, L. I.; A. G. Case, Southold, L. I. Aaron Baldwin, Newark, N. J.; Samuel C. Johnes, Hightstown, N. J.; Joseph M. Brown, Augusta, N. J.; Post Master, New-Brunswick, N. J.; Rev'ds A. C. Thomas and Zelotes Fuller, Philadelphia; John K. Wright, Easton, Pa.; Wm. George, Pottstown, Pa.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

G. R. on texts in Mathew, and SETOTEZ are received,

## LETTERS AND REMITTANCES.

Received at this office, ending January 18th.

P. M. Sheshequin; S. W. Washington City, D. C.; P. M. Lower Marion, Pa.; P. M. Portland Ala.; H. S. Orange, N. J. \$2; A. B.; H. Q. and I. M. M. Newark, N. J. each \$2; P. M. Green Hill, Ga. \$5; H. D. \$1, and J. K. and N. G. \$2 each, Brooklyn, L. I.; P. M. Adams, N. Y. \$2; Maj. W. B. Saugatuck, Conn. \$2; H. F. Newtown, Ct.; the articles will be forwarded first opportunity.

## RELIGIOUS NOTICES.

Br. S. J. Hillyer will preach at Newark N. J. Sunday afternoon, 29th inst. and at Camptown in the evening.

## NOTICE.

"The Ladies' Dorcas Society," will meet on Wednesday next at Mrs. Goldsmith's No. 25 Ludlow-street, at 2 o'clock, P. M.



FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

## STANZAS,

To the memory of Miss A. H. of Newton, Mass.

I knew her in her youthful spring,  
Ere childhood's rosy hours were fled;  
When o'er her cheek health's balmy wing  
Its radiant tints had fondly shed.  
Around her, Hope delusive gleam'd,  
And wrapt her in its dreamy trance,  
And life a bright Elysium seem'd,  
To girlhood's wild enchanted glance.

Years pass'd, and from her forehead fair,  
The thoughtless, careless look was gone,  
But in its place, a pensive air  
Far sweeter, over it was thrown.  
The same sweet smile, as fond and warm,  
Upon her lip and eye yet sate,  
But signs were gathering round her form,  
That whisper'd of an early fate.

I watch'd her as her step grew slow,  
And strength and beauty fast decay'd,  
And knew that on that pale, young brow,  
CONSUMPTION'S fatal hand was laid;  
I noted that disease had flung  
Its glassy lustre o'er her eye—  
And bitterly I wept, that one  
So graceful and so good should die.

Yet when in her pale hand, and weak,  
At parting, mine was meekly clasp'd,  
And I impress'd upon her cheek  
The kiss I *knew* would be my last,  
Enshrin'd within that mild, blue eye,  
So calm a resignation slept,  
It hush'd each wildly swelling sigh,  
And check'd the tears I would have wept.

I left her side, and breath'd 'adieu'  
To scenes where childhood wont to roam,  
To friends who long had loved me true,  
And went to share a stranger's home—  
I went, when Autumn held its sway,  
But long ere Winter chain'd the wave,  
They'd borne that meek, fair girl away,  
And laid her in the gloomy grave.

C. M. S.

FROM THE PIONEER AND VISITOR.

## PSALM 77.

God of all power! thy mighty arm  
Redeemed thy chosen sons from shame,  
Thy strength did Pharaoh's host disarm,  
And Egypt trembled at thy name.

The waters saw thee God of power!  
The waters saw—and were afraid;  
The depths were troubled in that hour,  
And from thy holy presence fled.

The watery treasures poured from heaven,  
Abroad were thy dread arrows hurled,  
Earth by thy thunder voice was riven,  
And lightnings flashed upon the world.

Thy way, O God! was in the sea,  
Nor footsteps marked thy watery path,  
Israel from bondage thou didst free,  
And lead her from the oppressor's wrath.

S. F. S.

## RELIGION.

We pity a man who has no religion in his heart, no high and irresistible yearnings after a better, holier existence; who is contented with the sensuality and grossness of earth; whose spirit never revolts at the darkness of his prison house, nor exults at the thought of his final emancipation. We pity him, for he affords no evidence of his high origin—no manifestation of that intellectual prerogative, which renders him a delegated lord of the visible creation. He can rank no higher than animal nature; the spiritual could never stoop so low. To seek for beastly excitements; to minister with a bountiful hand to strange and depraved appetites, are the attributes of the animal alone. To limit our hopes and aspirations to this life and world, is like remaining forever in the place of our birth, without ever lifting the veil of the horizon, which bent over our infancy.

There is religion in every thing around us; a calm and holy religion in the unbreathing things

of nature, which man would do well to imitate. It is a meek and blessed influence, stealing as it were, unawares upon the heart. It comes, it has no terror; no gloom in its approaches. It has to rouse up the passions; it is untrammelled by the creeds and unshadowed by the superstitions of man. It is fresh from the hands of its author; and growing from the immediate presence of the Great Spirit which pervades and quickens it. It looks out from every star. It is among the hills and valleys of earth; where the shrubless mountain top pierces the thin atmosphere of eternal winter—or where the mighty frost fluctuates before the strong wind, with its dark waves of green foliage. It is spread out like a legible language upon the broad face of the unsleeping ocean. It is the poetry of nature. It is that uplifts the spirit within us, until it is tall enough to overlook the shadows of our place of probation, which breaks link after link, the chains that binds us to mortality; and which opens to imagination a world of spiritual beauty and holiness.

## INFALLIBILITY.

Extract from Dr. Chalmers' sermon, "on the doctrine of Christian charity applied to the case of religious difference."

"It is said of the Papists, that they ascribe an infallibility to the Pope, so that if he were to say one thing, and the Bible another, his authority would carry it over the authority of God. And think you, my brethren, that there is no such Popery among you? You all, have or ought to have, Bibles; and how often is it repeated there, 'Hearken diligently unto me.' Now, do you obey this requirement, by making the reading of your Bibles a distinct and earnest exercise? Do you ever dare to bring your favorite minister to the tribunal of the word, or would you tremble at the presumption of such an attempt, so that the hearing of the word carries a greater authority over your mind than the reading of the word? Now this want of daring, this trembling at the very idea of a dissent from your minister, this indolent acquiescence in his doctrine, is just calling another man master; it is putting the authority of a man over the authority of God; it is throwing yourself into a prostrate attitude at the footstool of infallibility; it is not just kissing the toe of reverence, but it is the profound degradation of the mind and all of its faculties, and without the name of Popery—that your bosoms, your souls may be infected with the substantial poison, and your conscience be weighed down by the oppressive shackles of Popery. And all this, in the noon day effulgence of a Protestant country, where the bible, in your mother tongue, circulates among all your families—where it may be met with on almost every shelf, and is ever soliciting you to look to the wisdom that is inscribed upon its pages."

Happiness is the ultimate end of all our pursuits, and although we do not always attain it by honest and virtuous means, we may be certain never to succeed in the way of fraud, treachery, and deceit. It is the decree and the blessing of heaven that we shall be furnished with food and raiment by industry. Employment is the guarantee of health, misfortune's relief, the protection of youth, and the support of old age. Idleness is the parent of vice, the companion of rags, and the fatal precursor of a disgraceful end. Youth is the time to prepare for the pursuit of some useful avocation. Habits contracted in early days generally form the most conspicuous traits of that character which we sustain through life, and which will secure to us the friendship, esteem and confidence of our fellow men, the pleasure of an approving conscience, and the blessing of heaven on the one hand: or which will expose us to merited neglect from all who know us on the other. Be

advised then as you value health, peace and reputation, to treasure up in your mind that policy as a most sacred rule of conduct, which dictates temperance, industry, truth, fidelity and punctuality. These are the great cardinal virtues, without which professed religion itself is a delusion: and without which all hopes of happiness are false.

The powers of the human soul are more extensive, than they are in general imagined to be; and he who, urged by inclination or compelled by necessity, must frequently exert them, will soon find that the highest felicities of which our nature is capable, reside entirely within ourselves. The wants of life are, for the greater part, merely artificial; and although sensual objects most efficaciously contribute to our pleasure and content, it is not because the enjoyment of them is absolutely necessary, but because they have been rendered desirable by the effect of habit. The gratifications they afford easily persuade us, that the possession of them is essential to happiness; but if we had fortitude to resist their charms, and courage to look within our own bosoms for that felicity which we so anxiously expect to derive from external objects, we should frequently find a much greater variety of resources there than all the objects of sense are capable of affording.

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WILLIAM A. DREW,

Publisher and Editor.

Augusta, Me. Nov. 15, 1831.

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